

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6197

S E C R E T WARSAW 04652

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, PL (FORD, GERALD R.)

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO POLAND

REF: STATE 170849 AND PREVIOUS

1. AT THE 10:00 A.M. MEETING JULY 20 WITH ADVANCE TEAM, SPASKOZYKIR BEGAN PROCESS OF CLIMBING DOWN OFF GDANSK PROPOSAL. HE SAID THAT THE FIRST SECRETARY HAD BEEN INFORMED OF THE CONTENTION YESTERDAY'S DISCUSSION (IN WHICH RED CAVANEY TOLD HIM THAT THE PRESIDENT WOULD NOT GO TO GDANSK, BUT, IF THE POLES WISHED TO ARRANGE A VISIT TO A SECOND CITY, WAS PREPARED TO GO TO KRAKOW, SINCE KRAKOW HAS STRONG ASSOCIATIONS FOR SO MANY POLISH-AMERICANS, WHILE GDANSK HAS NONE. ALTERNATIVELY, THE PRESIDENT COULD SPEND ALL HIS TIME IN WARSAW; TRAVEL TO A SECOND CITY WAS NOT ESSENTIAL DURING SO SHORT A VISIT.)

2. HOWEVER, SPASOWSKI SAID, HE HAD NO REPLY FROM THE FIRST SECRETARY (WHO, HE TOLD US YESTERDAY, IS OUT OF WARSAW AT THE SEASHORE). SPASOWSKI ASKED CAVANEY IF THE POSITION CONVEYED YESTERDAY WAS THE RESPONSE OF THE PRESIDENT. CAVANEY SAID THAT IT WAS; HE HAD RECONFIRMED THIS OVERNIGHT THROUGH A MESSAGE BASED ON DIRECT CONSULTATION WITH THE PRESIDENT.

3. SPASOWSKI THEN SAID THAT, HAVING NO RESPONSE FROM THE FIRST SECRETARY, IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO PREJUDGE THE QUESTION OF WHAT SHOULD BE DONE ABOUT A VISIT TO A SECOND CITY, WHICH THE POLES CONTINUED TO FEEL WAS DESIRABLE.

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BASED ON CONSULTATION WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND OTHER

OFFICIALS WHO ARE SPENDING THIS HOLIDAY WEEKEND IN WARSAW, HOWEVER, THE POLISH SIDE WAS PREPARED TO PROCEED TO WORK OUT A MINUTE-BY-MINUTE SCHEDULE FOR THE FIRST DAY, PREDICATED UPON THE POSSIBILITY THAT THERE MIGHT BE A VISIT TO KRAKOW ON THE SECOND, ALWAYS WITH THE PROVISIO THAT, IN THE ABSENCE OF A RESPONSE FROM THE FIRST SECRETARY, IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO PREJUDGE THE QUESTION OF A POSSIBLE VISIT TO A SECOND CITY.

4. SPASOWSKI THEN SAID THAT, AS WE KNOW, PROMINENT WESTERN EUROPEAN STATESMAN WHO HAVE VISITED KRAKOW HAD MADE A SIDE TRIP TO OSWIECIM (AUSCHWITZ) TO HONOR THE FOUR MILLION DEAD REPRESENTED BY THE MONUMENT THERE. THE MOST RECENT OF THESE HAD BEEN GISCARD D'ESTAING LAST MONTH. (COMMENT: AMONG OTHERS HAVE BEEN DE GAULLE IN SEPTEMBER, 1967; FRG FOREIGN MINISTER SCHEEL, NOVEMBER, 1970; BUNDESTAG PRESIDENT ANNEMARIE RENGGER, OCTOBER, 1974; AND AUSTRIAN PRESIDENT KRISCHLAEGGER IN MAY, 1975, AS WELL AS A NUMBER OF U.S. CONGRESSMEN AT ONE TIME OR THE OTHER. END COMMENT) IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IN PRESENTING TO THE FIRST SECRETARY THE PROPOSAL FOR A VISIT TO KRAKOW IF IT INCLUDED A VISIT TO OSWIECIM. TRAVEL THERE TOOK LESS THAN AN HOUR BY ROAD, UO THAT TWO-AND-A-HALF TO THREE HOURS SHOULD BE ALLOWED FOR THEIVISIT. (COMMENT: ON THE MARGIN OF THE FORMAL DISCUSSION, POLISH OFFICIALS NOTED THAT HELICOPTERS MADE THE TRIP TO OSWIECIM FROM KRAKOW AIRPORT IN 20 MINUTES EACH WAY. END COMMENT)

5. RECOMMENDATION: I RECOMMEND THAT WE TELL THE POLES WE WOULD AGREE TO A VISIT BY THE PRESIDENT TO AUSCHWITZ PROVIDED THERE ARE NO REPEAT NO SPEECHES AND NO REPEAT NO VISITS TO THE MUSEUM, THE CREMATORIUMS, OR THE BARRACKS, SINCE THE TIME AVAILABLE FOR VISITING KRAKOW IS ALREADY SO SHORT. THE PRESIDENT WOULD LAY A WREATH WITH AN APPROPRIATE INSCRIPTION AND WOULD ASSUME A POSITION OF REVERENCE BEFORE THE MONUMENT TO THE DEAD, MOVE AROUND IN THE AREA OF THE MONUMENT, AND RETURN TO KRAKOW.

6. I MAKE THIS RECOMMENDATION BECAUSE (A) THERE ARE A GREAT MANY AMERICANS -- JEWS, POLES, AND PEOPLE OF OTHER ETHNIC BACK- GROUND -- WHOSE RELATIVES PERISHED AT AUSCHWITZ; (B) THERE IS NO PROBLEM OF GIVING OFFENSE TO THIRD PARTIES (AS

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EVIDENCED BY THE SCHEEL AND RENGGER VISITS); (C) IF THE PRESIDENT VISITS KRAKOW, WESTERN CORRESPONDENTS WHO KNOW POLAND ARE GOING TO ASK WHETHER HE WILL NOT ALSO VISIT OSWIECIM; IF OSWIECIM IS NOT PART OF THE VISIT TO KRAKOW, THE PROBLEM OF FINDING A POLITICALLY ACCEPTABLE ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT (NOT TO MENTION THE LIKELIHOOD THAT SOME CORRESPONDENT WILL FIND A POLISH JOURNALIST COLLEAGUE WHO WILL TELL HIM THAT THE OFFER OF A VISIT WAS

MADE AND TURNED DOWN).

7. RED CAVANEY HAS READ THIS MESSAGE.

DAVIES

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